

Message Text

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S/S-O: RELTZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 267605

EXDIS

FOL REPEAT CARACAS 11892 SENT ACTION SECSTATE DEC 02

QTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS11892

EXDIS

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR OAS VE CU

SUBJ: FOREIGN POLICY VIEWS OF PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ

1. IN A CONVERSATION YESTERDAY(DEC 1) AT MARACAIBO, WHERE BOTH
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PRESIDENT PEREZ AND I HAD GONE TO ATTEND CEREMONIES COMMEMORATING

THE SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY'S PRINCIPAL NEWSPAPER, PANORAMA, THE PRESIDENT ASKED IF I WOULD BE FREE TO HAVE BREAKFAST WITH HIM THIS MORNING. NATURALLY I ACCEPTED.

2. PRESIDENT DWELT LARGELY ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WITH CONSIDERABLE EMPHASIS ON THE OAS AND CUBA. IN ADDITION, THERE WAS A FAR-RANGING CONVERSATION IN WHICH HE EXPRESSED CHARACTERISTICALLY CANDID VIEWS ON OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE HEMISPHERE AND THEIR LEADERSHIP. IN CONSEQUENCE, SHOULD THE DEPT DECIDE TO CIRCULARIZE THIS REPORT, IT IS REQUESTED THAT ADDRESSEE EMBASSIES USE THIS INFO WITH CARE.

CUBA

2. THE PRESIDENT COULD NOT REFRAIN FROM HARKING BACK TO THE QUITO CONFERENCE, TO HIS ARRANGEMENT WITH AMBASSADOR MAILLIARD TO POSTPONE OAS ACTION ON CUBA UNTIL AFTER THE US ELECTIONS, AND TO HIS REPEATED INSISTENCE THAT THE DEPT HAD DELIBERATELY LEAKED WORD OF THE MAILLIARD-PEREZ AGREEMENT. HE DID HOWEVER, ACCEPT MY POINT WHEN I SAID IT WAS INCREDIBLE TO SUPPOSE THAT THE DEPT WOULD LEAK THAT INFO SINCE IT COULD ONLY BE INJURIOUS TO OURSELVES.

3. THE PRESIDENT COMPLAINED THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD SHOWN BY HIS ABSENCE FROM QUITO THAT HE REALLY DID NOT CARE ABOUT LATIN AMERICA. I SAID THIS WAS NOT THE CASE, AS INSTANCED BY THE KISSINGER PRESENCE AT MEXICO EARLIER THIS YEAR, BUT THAT THERE WERE TWO GOOD REASONS FOR THE SECRETARY'S NOT APPEARING AT QUITO, ONE BEING THE FACT THAT HE HAD VISITED SOME SEVENTEEN COUNTRIES IN ALMOST AS MANY DAYS; AND THE OTHER THAT FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF INTERNAL POLITICS IN THE US, IF IN FACT THE US WAS TO BE OUTVOTED AT THE QUITO CONFERENCE, THERE WAS NO PARTICULAR ADVANTAGE FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO PRESIDE OVER WHAT MIGHT BE CONSTRUED AS A DIPLOMATIC DEFEAT. THIS, HOWEVER, HAD NOT HAPPENED AND I WAS SATISFIED IN MY OWN MIND THAT THE US HAD EXERTED NO PRESSURE ON ANY OTHER DELEGATES AS TO HOW THEY SHOULD VOTE AT QUITO. IT SEEMED TO ME OF GREATER IMPORTANCE TO STOP HARKING OVER RECENT PAST EVENTS AND TO LOOK AHEAD AS TO WHAT POLICES MIGHT BE FOLLOWED IN FUTURE
DID VENEZUELA WANT THE US TO CONSULT FURTHER ON CUBA?
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4. PEREZ SHOWED CONSISTENT INCONSISTENCY IN AT THE SAME TIME PROFESSING UNSWERVING DEVOTION TO THE OAS WHILE MAINTAINING THAT FOLLOWING THE QUITO MEETING EACH HEMISPHEREIC COUNTRY SHOULD NOW FEEL FREE TO DO AS IT PLEASED WITH REGARD TO CUBA REGARDLESS OF THE OAS. IN A MOOD OF EATING HIS CAKE AND HAVING IT TOO, HE SEEMED TO BELIEVE THAT HENCEFORTH THE HEMISPHERE REPUBLICS COULD IGNORE THE OAS SO FAR AS CUBA SANCTIONS WERE CONCERNED BUT

SOMEHOW OR OTHER COULD MAINTAIN AND MAKE STRONGER THE OAS ORGANIZATION.

5. PRESIDENT PEREZ SAID THAT HE HAD NOT YET DECIDED WHEN TO RECOGNIZE CUBA BUT THAT VENEZUELA WOULD GO AHEAD AND RE-ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AT A TIME WHICH BEST SUITED ITS CONVENIENCE. HE SAID REPEATEDLY THAT VENEZUELA IN EFFECT HAD RESUMED PRACTICAL RELATIONS WITH CUBA AND THAT HE INTENDED TO GO AHEAD WITH TRADE EXCHANGES, INCLUDING THE SALE OF VENEZUELAN RICE FOR CUBAN SUGAR. HOWEVER, IF THERE WERE TO BE ANY SALE OF VENEZUELAN PETROLEUM TO CUBA, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE ON A CASH BASIS. HE DID NOT INTEND TO BAIL OUT THE RUSSIANS IN GIVING OIL TO CASTRO.

6. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT BEFORE THE QUITO CONFERENCE BEGAN, HE HAD RECEIVED A VISIT FROM PANAMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER TACK WHO CLAIMED THAT PANAMA HAD BEEN THREATENED BY THE US WITH BREAKING OFF THE CANAL NEGOTIATIONS IF IT DID NOT AT LEAST ABSTAIN ON CUBA. WHETHER IN FACT TACK MADE SUCH A STATEMENT I HAVE NO MEANS OF ASCERTAINING, BUT AT LEAST THE PRESIDENT OF VENEZUELA SEEMS TO BELIEVE THAT WE DID EXERT DIRECT AND BLUNT PRESSURE ON PANAMA ON THE CUBAN ISSUE. HE ALSO REPEATED THAT WERE IT NOT FOR US SUASION HAITI WOULD HAVE VOTED IN FAVOR OF RECOGNIZING CASTRO.

7. SO FAR AS PRACTICAL RELATIONS ARE CONCERNED, THE PRESIDENT SAID HE HAD RECEIVED CASTRO'S UNOFFICIAL ENVOY, NORBERTO HERNANDEZ, WHO HAD BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN HELPING A VENEZUELAN FRIEND OF PRESIDENT PEREZ TO SECURE THE RELEASE OF HIS WIFE'S PARENTS WHO HAD BEEN JAILED BY CASTRO IN CUBA. I GOT THE IMPRESSION THAT HERNANDEZ WOULD BE A PRINCIPAL INSTRUMENT IN WORKING OUT THE DETAILS OF THE EVENTUAL RECOGNITION BY VENEZUELA OF THE CASTRO REGIME

.
THE PRESIDENT ADDED SOMEWHAT DEFENSIVELY THAT IT WOULD BE GENERALLY USEFUL FOR THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMUNITY IF A DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY
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LIKE VENEZUELA SHOULD MAINTAIN AN EMBASSY IN HAVANA. HE REFERRED TO CASTRO AS A "LOCO FANATICO" BUT SAID THAT VENEZUELA COULD NO LONGER MAINTAIN THE PRETENSE OF OAS OSTRACISM AND WOULD RECOGNIZE CUBA AT ITS OWN GOOD TIME, BUT APPARENTLY, HOWEVER, BEFORE THE MEETING OF HEMISPHERIC FOREIGN MINISTERS IN BUENOS AIRES NEXT MARCH.

AYACUCHO

8. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT THE PERUVIAN-ORGANIZED MEETING AT THE END OF THIS WEEK TO COMMEMORATE THE SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE BATTLE OF AYACUCHO WOULD PROBABLY BE A FLOP. HE REGRETTED THE ABSENCE OF SO MANY PRESIDENTS, INCLUDING THOSE OF COLOMBIA, ECUADOR, AND ARGENTINA. HE SAID HE HAD TALKED ON THE PHONE WITH LOPEZ MICHELSEN OF COLOMBIA WHO HAD SOMEWHAT WEAKLY EXCUSED

HIMSELF FROM GOING TO LIMA FOR FEAR OF GETTING INVOLVED IN DIFFICULTIES WITH HIS CONGRESS.

9. PEREZ IN AN ASIDE SAID HE DOUBTED IF LOPEZ MICHELSEN COULD STAY THE COURSE AS PRESIDENT OF COLOMBIA. HE SAID THAT HIS COLLEAGUE ACROSS THE FRONTIER PRIDED HIMSELF ON BEING VERY STUDIOUS AND SOMEWHAT "ENGLISH IN ATTITUDE," WITH THE IMPLICATION THAT HE, PEREZ AS A PRACTICAL POLITICIAN HAD A MORE DOWN TO EARTH APPROACH IN ASSESSING SITUATIONS.

10. PEREZ EXPRESSED CONCERN AT THE DEGREE OF PERUVIAN REARMAMENT AND ADDED THAT IN ADDITION TO THE FACT OF SOVIET EQUIPMENT, THERE WERE LARGE NUMBERS OF SOVIET TECHNICIANS IN PERU. HE SAID HE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF THE PERUVIAN REGIME WENT TO WAR WITH CHILE, THE TERRITORIAL OBJECTIVE BEING TO RECOVER ARICA. HE ALSO SPOKE DARKLY OF THE PRESENT CHILEAN MILITARY JUNTA AND THOUGHT THAT GENERAL PINOCHET AND HIS COLLEAGUES WERE GOING TOO FAR IN THEIR CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND IN THE GENERALLY REPRESSIVE MEASURES WHICH THE CHILEAN JUNTA HAD ADOPTED. HOPEFULLY WHEN HE WAS AT LIMA HE MIGHT HAVE A WORD WITH PINOCHET. PEREZ THEN ASKED IF WE KNEW WHY MEXICO HAD BROKEN RELATIONS WITH CHILE. WHEN I SAID I DID NOT KNOW, HE SAID HE DID NOT EITHER, AND THAT THE MEXICANS, IN ASKING VENEZUELA TO REPRESENT THEIR INTEREST IN CHILE, HAD IGNORED HIS REQUEST FOR INFO ON THE REASONS FOR THE BREAK.
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CENTRAL AMERICAN SUMMIT AT CARACAS

11. ADVERTING TO THE MINI-SUMMIT MEETING OF CENTRAL AMERICAN PRESIDENTS TO BE HELD IN CARACAS DECEMBER 13-14, HE SAID IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION THAT THE AGENDA WOULD BE CONFINED TO ECONOMIC SUBJECTS AND THAT HE DID NOT EXPECT THAT ANY POLITICAL ISSUES, INCLUDING CUBAN RECOGNITION, WOULD BE DISCUSSED.

COLOMBIAN-VENEZUELAN RELATIONS

12. COMING AGAIN TO COLOMBIAN-VENEZUELAN RELATIONS, THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT HE HAD REACHED AN AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE WITHOUT GOING TO PRESIDENT PASTRANA FOR SETTLEMENT OF THE SUBMARINE BOUNDARY IN THE GULF OF VENEZUELA WHEREBY BOTH GOVTS WOULD AGREE TO DIVIDE EQUALLY ANY OIL OR OTHER WEALTH DISCOVERED IN THE DISPUTED ZONE, AND THAT INCOMING PRESIDENT LOPEZ HAD AGREED TO SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT, BUT THAT THE DEAL HAD FALLEN THROUGH OWING TO "SABOTAGE" BY EX-PRESIDENT CALDERA, WHOM HE LIKENED TO LUCIFER.

13. IT WAS AN ALMOST INDIGESTIBLE BREAKFAST.

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KISSINGER

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